

90 days. This rule, which was strongly validated by an Institute of Medicine report, provides a more equitable system of treatment for over 63,000 Americans waiting for an organ transplant; its implementation would likely prevent the deaths of hundreds of Americans. Since almost 5,000 people die each year waiting for an organ transplant, we must be allowed to move forward on this issue and implement the rule without further delay.

The bill does not provide any of the \$9.5 million I requested for HHS' Office of the General Counsel and Departmental Appeals Board to handle legal advice, regulations review, and litigation support, and to conduct hearings and issue decisions on nursing home enforcement cases as part of my Nursing Home Initiative. This would increase the backlog of nursing home appeals and impair Federal oversight of nursing home quality and safety standards. A reduction in funds for enforcement is inconsistent with the concerns that the GAO and the Congress have raised about this issue.

The bill cuts funds to counter bioterrorism. It funds less than half my request for CDC's stockpile, limiting the amount of vaccines, antibiotics, and other medical supplies that can be stockpiled to deploy in the event of a chemical or biological attack. In addition, the bill does not include \$13.4 million for critical FDA expedited regulatory review/approval of pharmaceuticals to combat chemical and biological agent weapons.

The bill provides full funding of \$350 million in FY 2002 for the Corporation for Public Broadcasting. However, the bill provides only \$10 million of the \$20 million requested for the digital transition initiative in FY 2000. This funding is required to help the public broadcasting system meet the Federal deadline to establish digital broadcasting capability by May 1, 2003.

The enrolled bill delays the availability of \$10.9 billion of funding until September 29, 2000. While modest levels of delayed obligations could potentially be sustained without hurting the affected programs, the levels in the enrolled bill are excessive, resulting in delays in NIH research grants, delays in CDC immunizations for children, and delays in the delivery of health services to low income Americans through community health centers and rural health clinics.

The bill also seriously underfunds critical Departmental management activities in the Departments of Labor and Education and the Social Security Administration (SSA). For Education, these reductions would hamstring efforts to replace the Department's accounting system and undermine the new Performance-Based Organization's plans to streamline and modernize student aid computer systems. Reductions to the Department of Labor (DOL) would undercut the agency's ability to comply with the requirements of the Clinger-Cohen and Computer Security

Acts, adjudicate contested claims in several of its benefits programs, and examine and update the 1996 study on Family and Medical Leave policies. For SSA, the reductions would result in significantly longer waiting times for disability applicants and millions of individuals who visit SSA field offices.

In adopting an across-the-board reduction, the Congress has abdicated its responsibility to make tough choices. Governing is about making choices and selecting priorities that will serve the national interest. By choosing an across-the-board cut, the Congress has failed to meet that responsibility.

This across-the-board cut would result in indiscriminate reductions in important areas such as education, the environment, and law enforcement. In addition, this cut would have an adverse impact on certain national security programs. The indiscriminate nature of the cut would require a reduction of over \$700 million for military personnel, which would require the military services to make cuts in recruiting and lose up to 48,000 military personnel.

In adopting this cost-saving technique, the Congress is asserting that it will not have to dip into the Social Security surplus. However, this cut does not eliminate the need to dip into the Social Security surplus.

For these reasons, this across-the-board cut is not acceptable.

In addition to the specific program cuts and the 0.97 percent across-the-board reduction, the bill contains a \$121 million reduction in salaries and expenses for the agencies funded by this bill, exacerbating the problems caused by the bill's underfunding of critical Departmental management activities. If, for example, the \$121 million reduction were allocated proportionately across all agencies funded in the Labor/HHS/Education bill, HHS would have to absorb an approximately \$55 million reduction to its salaries and expenses accounts, Labor would be cut by about \$14 million, Education by about \$5 million, and SSA by some \$45 million. This would dramatically affect the delivery of essential human services and education programs and the protection of employees in the workplace.

With respect to the District of Columbia component of the bill, I am pleased that the majority and minority in the Congress were able to come together to pass a version of the District of Columbia Appropriations Bill that I would sign if presented to me separately and as it is currently constructed. While I continue to object to remaining riders, some of the highly objectionable provisions that would have intruded upon local citizens' right to make decisions about local matters have been modified from previous versions of the bill. That is a fair compromise. We will continue to strenuously urge the Congress to keep such riders off of the FY 2001 D.C. Appropriations Bill.

I commend the Congress for providing the Federal funds I requested for the District of Columbia. The bill includes essential funding for District Courts and Corrections and the D.C. Offender Supervision Agency and provides requested funds for a new tuition assistance program for District of Columbia residents. The bill also includes funding to promote the adoption of children in the District's foster care system, to support the Children's National Medical Center, to assist the Metropolitan Police Department in eliminating open-air drug trafficking in the District, and for drug testing and treatment, among other programs. However, I continue to object to remaining riders that violate the principles of home rule.

I look forward to working with the Congress to craft an appropriations bill that I can support, and to passage of one that will facilitate our shared objectives.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON.

THE WHITE HOUSE, November 3, 1999.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The objections of the President will be spread at large upon the Journal, and the message and bill will be printed as a House document.

Mr. ISTOOK. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the message of the President and the bill be referred to the Committee on Appropriations.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Oklahoma?

There was no objection.

□ 1845

REPORT ON RESOLUTION WAIVING REQUIREMENTS OF CLAUSE 6(a) OF RULE XIII WITH RESPECT TO THE SAME DAY CONSIDERATION OF CERTAIN RESOLUTIONS REPORTED BY THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

Mr. DIAZ-BALART, from the Committee on Rules, submitted a privileged report (Rept. No. 106-442) on the resolution (H. Res. 356) waiving requirements of clause 6(a) of rule XIII with respect to consideration of certain resolutions reported from the Committee on Rules, which was referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed.

WHEN ONE READS THE PRESIDENT'S SUBMITTAL ON STRENGTHENING SOCIAL SECURITY, THE NUMBERS DO NOT ADD UP

(Mr. OSE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks and include therein extraneous material.)

Mr. OSE. Mr. Speaker, I rise again today to highlight the President's submittal to the House on strengthening Social Security, the Medicare Act of 1999.